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THE
ANSWER
AT LARGE
TO
Mr. P--TT's SPEECH.

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LONDON:
Printed for W. NICOLL, at the Paper-Mill,
in St. Paul's Church-Yard.
MDCCLXVI.

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ANSWER at large

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Mr. P—T T's SPEECH.

THE honourable Gentleman, Sir, has made many extraordinary distinctions, in a very extraordinary manner; and indeed it is allowed, on all hands, that he is a very extraordinary orator: he has told us, Sir, that though he has spoke a second time, yet that he has spoke but once. He has endeavoured, indeed, to avoid the absurdity, by saying, "That he only finished, what he designedly left imperfect:" And I suppose he would infer that he delivered only one speech: but I think that even this expedient will not do, for I have always considered the sentiments that a gentleman thinks fit to deliver at

once, as one speech, whatever other sentiments he may suppose to be connected with them; and that if a gentleman who has spoken once, thinks fit, after others have replied, to speak again, he not only speaks twice, but makes two speeches: however, as the House has indulged him, I shall consider only what he has said.

He has said, Sir, much in praise of himself and much to the disadvantage of others; he has told us, "how he fought for merit wherever it was to be found; how he found it in the mountains of the north; how this merit was an intrepid race of men; how he drew this intrepid race into our service; and what advantages we have derived from them."

He has also, with his usual modesty, told us, "That no minister ever fought

sought for merit before him ;” and insinuated, that the present Ministry are the puppets of clandestine power.

As to the encomium on himself, I shall leave him in the peaceable possession of all the honour he can derive from it : as for his condemnation of others, it has little to do with the question in debate, and, as far as it is pertinent it has been effectually answered already ; I shall therefore take no notice of that, but endeavour to give some reply to such part of his harangue on the subject of the day as I understand, and point out such parts as I do not, to the attention of gentlemen of superior penetration.

It is, indeed, common for this Gentleman to get out of sight : it is his custom to mount a kind of Rhetorical Ladder, to shuffle the dust off his feet into the eyes of those that look
up

up after him, and, when he is got to the top, to amuse those that can hear him, with some choice fragment from the wonderful storehouse of his memory, as he has to day by the scrap of a ballad by Prior. I must confess—"I love to be explicit,"—that he puts me in mind of other ingenious gentlemen, great climbers, who, under pretence of sweeping a chimney, clamber to the top and then, call a coach.

However, let us take this Gentleman down from his altitude, set him upon plain ground, and hear what he has to say for himself.

He tells us, that Americans are not bastards; that he comes not armed at all points with law-cases and acts of parliament; with the statute-book, doubled down in dog's-ears, to defend the cause of Liberty; but that upon a general and constitutional principle

principle he will defend Liberty against any man.

Now, Sir, admitting all these assertions, what relation have they to the point in debate? No gentleman in this House has pretended that the British subjects in America, have not the same privileges with the British subjects in England.

It is true, statute-books have been doubled down, that particular parts might be easily referred to, in order to ascertain what, in a particular instance, is law: and this might surely be done with propriety; for if not by the books that contain our laws, it is difficult to know by what our laws can be ascertained. But when this Gentleman, with his usual eloquence, tells us that these books are doubled down in *dog's-ears*, he seems to suppose that the propriety of doubling them down will

will vanish, and indeed to insinuate that the statute-books themselves should be held as cheap as another great friend to Liberty held Magna Charta, when he thought fit to change the word *Charta* into another of no very delicate or respectable meaning*.

I shall, however, take no further notice of this Gentleman's oratory or his witticisms, but try if among all the shreds of tinsel and fringe, trope and metaphor, which he has liberally scattered about, I can find common sense enough to patch into an argument.

The Honourable Gentleman has told us that England has no right to tax America, because Taxation is no part

* When Oliver Cromwell was told that something he was doing was contrary to Magna Charta; he cried out don't tell me of your Magna F---rta, I say it shall done.

of the governing or legislative power; because the Taxes are the gift and grant of the Commons alone; and because in the British House of Commons the Americans are not virtually represented.

This Argument takes for granted that no British Subject can be legally taxed, that is not virtually represented. But a great number of British Subjects in this Kingdom have been taxed ever since taxes have been raised, though they have not been virtually represented: it is therefore to be presumed that they have been legally taxed; that they have been taxed consistently with that constitution or form of government, which has long been, and is now established among us.

The Honourable Gentleman supposes that the taxes are a gift of the Commons, and that taxation is no part

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of the governing or legislative power; now, admitting this to be true, can it be pretended that the Commons have not a constitutional right to give and grant a certain proportion of the common property of the Kingdom, that is, of the subjects as a collective body, for public purposes? that the same constitution, under which they hold this right, has not appointed that the House of Commons shall consist of persons chosen by the Freeholders and Freemen of Great Britain? that is, by persons who possess a freehold of forty shillings a year, or are members of some corporation, to which the right of electing Members of Parliament has been granted? or that the same constitution does not suppose that, although these electors only are virtually represented, yet that the other subjects, at least equally numerous, are *legally* represented by the same body, and liable to contribute to whatever sum it shall grant? In

In arbitrary governments money is raised by the will of the Sovereign, in our's by the Commons, in concurrence with the Lords and the King. In the Commons the power is lodged of granting out of the common purse what is thought requisite for common service: whether it is, or is not their property, exclusively, is not the question: they give what is and is not their own in grants that respect the British subjects residing in Great Britain, whenever they grant a sum that is borrowed at interest, and the interest of which is paid by a tax levied, not on their own property only, but on the property of others.

I might here observe, that though the grant is the act of the Commons alone, yet the taxation to raise the money granted, or interest for it if borrowed, is the act of the legislature, and that it is necessary, not to the form only, but to the essence of taxation,

that all parts of the legislature should concur.

The Honourable Gentleman has enquired by whom the Americans are represented? I answer, by the British House of Commons, by the same body that represents all the subjects in Great Britain that have no vote for Members of Parliament.

As to the rotten parts of the constitution, I shall leave them to be made sound as they can: I am not to consider what the constitution might be, but what it is. I am not to consider myself as in Utopia; but in Britain; I have nothing to do with speculation concerning liberty in general; nor am I to examine how far natural liberty ought to be restrained, nor in what manner, or with what persons, a common deposit of power to restrain it may be best placed: I affirm that, by the

the constitution of Great Britain, every subject of Great Britain, wheresoever he is, is supposed to be *legally* represented by persons chosen by Freeholders and Freemen of Corporations, who alone are virtually and immediately represented by them.

The Honourable Gentleman seemed in some degree to be aware of this Argument, by turning the examination of the question into a different channel; by his reproaching the Statute book with dog's ears; and by his declamations in favour of liberty upon general principles, which the vertigo of his brain has confounded with liberty upon the principles of a particular constitution.

He has also another subterfuge, into which I must follow him, though here indeed I must leave common sense

sense behind me: He tells us that though it is illegal to tax the British subjects in America because they have no vote for Members, yet it is legal to tax the British subjects in Britain who have not a vote, because many of them may have a vote if they will; and because many of them have an influence over those that have votes already. Now upon the same principles it might be proved that, it being lawful to hang a man who has committed a murder, it is also lawful to hang a man that has not committed a murder, because many men, not murderers, might commit a murder if they would; and many such men have influence over others, by whom a murder may happen to be committed.

It is or it is not lawful to tax a subject of Great Britain not virtually represented: if lawful to tax such subjects

jects in England, it is lawful to tax such subjects in America ; if not lawful to tax such subjects in America, it is not lawful to tax such subjects in England ; the lawfulness or unlawfulness does not depend upon what men may be, but upon what they are ; and there is the same reason for a subject here to refuse to pay the tax as for those in America.

The Honourable Gentleman has been pleased to say he is glad the Americans have resisted ; he is glad therefore that the subjects of Great-Britain in America have broken the laws by which they acknowledge themselves to be bound ; have violated the public peace, and injured personal property, because they thought fit to determine what Act of the British Parliament was or was not constitutional.

If

If the subjects of America had properly remonstrated against the Act in question, they would have incurred no censure of mine, nor should I, in that case, have been very zealous against our repealing an Act after reasons had been properly offered against it, which reasons, when it was passed, were not under consideration; but now to repeal an Act, which has been solemnly and deliberately made, merely because a licentious and tumultuous rabble, countenanced perhaps by those who ought to have behaved better, has endangered the lives, and invaded the property of his Majesty's subjects and servants, under a pretence forsooth of being the patrons of liberty, seems to be a stride towards anarchy and confusion, a stroke at constitutional and rational freedom, which ought to make every sensible lover of his country tremble.

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The Honourable Gentleman will excuse me—he does not often convince me, but I confess he frequently makes me laugh: he has a happy talent at deviating into joke; an honourable member, who has been censured for having advised the measure now under debate, says, when he proposed the tax, he frequently asked the house if any gentleman would object to the right, and that nobody attempted to deny it. Instead of admitting this as a proof that the Honourable Gentleman submitted his opinion to others, and had the most respectable sanction for it, his honourable opponent observes, *that there is a modesty in the house that does not chuse to contradict a Minister:* but what then? does it follow that a Minister who asks the opinion of the house has not done all that he can do, or that when he has done all that he

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can do, he is to blame for not having done more?

There is, however, another piece of wit which this Gentleman has thought fit to substitute for argument, that I cannot let pass: he tells us, that the Honourable Gentleman has mentioned the stockholders, and then adds, that he hopes the debts of the nation are not reckon'd as part of the national estate; would he insinuate by this that the stockholder, and the stockholder alone, may legally be taxed, though not virtually represented? the national debt is money due to individuals, this money is their estate; the national estate is out of the question; this estate of the creditors of the public is taxed by persons whom they do not chuse, and who do not virtually represent them; it is either legally taxed, or illegally; if ille-

illegally, to what tends his question? if legally, to what tends his argument?

As to the distinction between internal and external taxes, some gentlemen have said that they did not understand it, and I confess myself to be one of the number: the Honourable Gentleman says, that there is a plain distinction between taxes to raise a revenue, and duties imposed to regulate trade and accommodate the subject. But what is the distinction that is so plain? Why the distinction is only in the purpose for which the tax is laid; a power to tax for one purpose, is a power to tax for another; besides, external taxes are frequently laid primarily to pay interest for money borrowed in consequence of supplies granted by the Commons,

and not merely to regulate trade, or accommodate the subject; the tax to raise interest for the supply is, or ought to be, laid so as to answer other purposes, and all the taxes laid to regulate trade and accommodate the subject, are carried to the supply.

The Gentleman supposes that the commercial system of America, may be altered to advantage, and so do I too: he wishes also that a day may be appointed to consider the state of the nation with respect to America, and hopes that gentleman will come to this debate with temper and impartiality, so do I too: he may also, for aught I know, wish that our constitution was improved, and I believe that no gentleman here would be against improving it. Gentlemen may perhaps differ with respect to the alterations that may be proposed

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as improvements, but what have we at present to do with these peradventures? As there can be no doubt, tropes and figures and jokes aside, but that, as the constitution now stands, England has a right to tax her colonies, and that the exercise of that power over the British subjects in America, which is, and has long been, exercised over many British subjects in England, will not make them either bastards or slaves; as no legal remonstrance has been made to government from America against the Act in question; and as there is no reason to repeal it but the tumults of a mob, who have broken windows, plundered houses, and threatened to cut throats, I must *beg leave to tell the House what is really my opinion; it is, that the Stamp-Act be NOT repealed, no not*

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